

Ex-CIA Bosses Oppose Spy 'Superchief' Plan

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Three men who once held the reins at the Central Intelligence Agency voiced opposition Wednesday to a proposal that would create a U.S. spy chief who would work outside the CIA.

Former CIA chiefs William Colby and George Bush and E. Henry Knoche, who was acting director in 1975, testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee which is debating a proposed charter designed to reorganize and reform intelligence agencies to prevent past abuses.

"The CIA director should be the director of national intelligence," Bush said. "A director of national intelligence separated from his CIA troops... would be virtually isolated."

Bush said the CIA director should be the chief foreign intelligence adviser to the president and physically separated from the White House.

The proposed statute, subject to presidential approval, would provide for a separate director of central intelligence with a subordinate head of CIA.

Colby and Knoche agreed with Bush that, if anything, the CIA director's role needed to be enhanced rather than diminished.

But they divided on other provisions of the proposed statute.

Bush and Knoche said they concurred with Clark Clifford, who as a White House aide helped draft the original 1947 National Security Act establishing the CIA. The new statute contained too many restrictions which would inhibit intelligence gathering and discourage friendly foreign agencies and nationals from supplying information, Clifford testified Tuesday.

One proposal, he noted, required the director of central intelligence to report to two congressional committees on any proposed agreement to use any foreign intelligence agency or the security service of a foreign government.

"This is too broad," he said. "Some U.S. sources are drying up because foreign services don't believe the U.S. Congress can keep secrets."